



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of Information
Press Service



Release - Immediate

April 9, 1929

BUFFALO SHIPPED TO ALASKA
REPORTED IN GOOD CONDITION

The introduction of buffalo into Alaska is an experiment that is being watched with much interest by wild-life conservationists. Twenty-three of these animals were shipped from the National Bison Range, Montana, to the Territory by the Alaska Game Commission in June, 1928 through an appropriation made for the purpose by the Territorial Legislature. Nineteen of them were liberated near McCarty, Alaska, and four were held at the Reindeer Experiment Station of the Biological Survey of the U. S. Department of Agriculture at Fairbanks for experimental purposes.

In a recent report to the Biological Survey, L. J. Falmer, in charge of the reindeer station stated that up to January 9 the buffalo were located on Jarvis Creek, not far from where they were liberated, and were feeding to a large extent on wild vetch. They seem to have adapted themselves to the country, he said, and to be doing well. On February 18 the herd was reported on Clear Water Creek, 9 miles from McCarty, a stream that has open water throughout the winter and a good growth of brush and grass. The Alaska Game Commission has hay stored at McCarty for feeding the buffalo if necessary, but up to mid-February the animals were finding sufficient food and were in good condition, although there had been some unusually heavy snowfalls.

The buffalo retained at the reindeer station are each fed at the rate of 15 pounds of hay a day, and are in excellent condition--round and fat. The winter has been unusually mild at the station, but during one brief period when the temperature ranged from 30 to 40 degrees below zero with high humidity--it was noted that the animals were covered with hoarfrost, and as soon as they finished feeding at the corrals each morning, they would immediately seek an upper sheltered hollow in the middle of one of the pastures or the top of a warmer adjoining ridge. During warm weather the buffalo remain near the feed troughs at the corrals. On the range, when not grazing, they seek shelter in the forest.